

**WHAT IS CLAIMED IS:**

1. An apparatus for making cushions, comprising:
  - a preliminary foaming device for heating and foaming raw material beads;
  - an upward stream passage for upwardly moving, by hot air, foaming particles which are output from the preliminary foaming device;
  - a storing section for storing the foaming particles received from the upward stream passage;
  - a relay section which is connected to a lower portion of the storing section for receiving the foaming particles; and
  - an outputting section which is in communication with the relay section and which can freely open and close a passage of the relay section.
2. The apparatus according to claim 1, wherein
  - the storing section includes first and second storing portions which are separated from each other, and the foaming particles are not transferred from the first storing portion to the second storing portion until a predetermined time is elapsed.
3. The apparatus according to claim 2, wherein
  - an open/close valve and a blower which operate in association with each other are disposed between the first and second storing portions.
4. The apparatus according to claim 1, wherein
  - a blocking section for preventing a foaming particle having a large

diameter from passing therethrough is disposed between the preliminary foaming device and the upward stream passage.

5. The apparatus according to claim 4, wherein the blocking section includes a rocking sieve plate.

6. The apparatus according to claim 1, wherein the outputting section is cylindrical in shape, and outputs the foaming particles by free fall.

7. The apparatus according to claim 1, wherein particle diameters of the foaming particles are controlled to about 0.1 to 0.9 mm.

8. The apparatus according to claim 1, wherein the outputting section is provided with mounting portions which extends rightward and leftward of an operator, the mounting portion holds plungers which reciprocate, and tip ends of the plungers are provided with grasping sections which elastically abut against the cylindrical outputting portion.

9. A method for making cushions, comprising the steps of:  
upwardly moving by hot air, to a storing section, foaming particles which are made by heating and foaming raw material beads by a preliminary foaming device;

transferring the foaming particles which have been subjected to a maturing processing to an outputting section by their own weights through a relay section connected to a lower portion of the storing section; and  
freely opening and closing the outputting section to charge a necessary amount of foaming particles into a cushion.

10. The method according to claim 9, wherein  
the storing section includes first and second storing portions which are separated from each other, and the foaming particles are not transferred from the first storing portion to the second storing portion until a predetermined time is elapsed.

11. The method according to claim 10, wherein  
an open/close valve and a blower which operate in association with each other are disposed between the first and second storing portions.

12. The method according to claim 9, wherein  
a blocking section for determining a particle diameter of the foaming particle to prevent a foaming particle having a large diameter from passing therethrough is disposed between the preliminary foaming device and the upward stream passage.

13. The method according to claim 12, wherein  
the blocking section includes a rocking sieve plate.

14. The making method according to claim 9, wherein the outputting section is cylindrical in shape, and outputs the foaming particles by free fall.

15. The method according to claim 9, wherein particle diameters of the foaming particles are controlled to about 0.1 to 0.9 mm.

16. Cushions made by the apparatus according to claim 1.

17. Cushions made by the method according to claim 9.